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Building for the Future: Moraga town council's goals for 2020

By Vera Kochan



Photo provided

Each January the Moraga Town Council decides upon the goals for the new year, and this year was no exception. Labeling the goals "Building for the Future" is the mantra the council members and town staff strive to adhere to.

During the Jan. 22 council meeting, Mayor Kimberleigh Korpus proposed a list of 12 goals for the calendar year that would allow for community input, direct progress-of-work plans for staff and prioritize limited resources toward high priority projects.

The town council voted to maintain and improve fiscal discipline by adopting a balanced budget, continuing high quality fiscal reporting, and continuing to position the town for long-term fiscal sustainability and operational efficiency, including the following approaches: To remain focused on planning, saving and spending for long-term priorities, needs, and council goals, ensuring the town's limited resources are not diverted from priority projects; diligently monitor legal fees, and remain vigilant as to

the manner in which town decisions impact legal costs in the short and long term; reassess general purpose fund allocations (as appropriate) and ensure the highest and best use of those limited funds in the fiscal year 2020/21 budget (for example: exploring reallocation of some of Measure K funds and the repurposing of some of the Fund 140 - Property Tax Special District Lighting Funds to help fund the town's unfunded infrastructure needs; prioritize long-term propagation and preservation of institutional knowledge and stability in decision making processes; and streamline town council meetings to enable regular adjournment no later than 11 p.m.

Still on the threshold of completion is the Capital Improvement Plan Budget Module to be implemented along with other enhancements to be explored in 2020. Another goal is to maintain and improve public safety through the continued provision of high quality police and emergency response services and the exploration of funding opportunities for an additional police officer (or perhaps a school resource officer) in town.

The council also plans to begin construction on the permanent Canyon Road Bridge, completing Phase 1 without incident, including submitting for reimbursement of costs in a timely manner, and continue implementation and development of the Storm Drain System Operations and Maintenance Program and begin work on needed storm drain CIPs.

Additional goals include implementing the 2020 \$1.8 million Neighborhood Streets and Roads Repair Program, complete design of 2021 Pavement Reconstruction Project (including potential reprioritization of worst-condition streets), and pursuing additional third-party funding opportunities to supplement these efforts to maintain the town's streets and roads. The 2020 Pavement Overlay Project will accept bids in early 2020.

Revising the town's zoning code to implement the Moraga Center Specific Plan is also on the agenda. Community design firm Placeworks is drafting the zoning code amendments and a study session along with follow-up meetings with the planning commission are scheduled for February. A study session and follow-up meeting with the town council to adopt the amendments will follow.

The council also hopes to enhance Moraga's business environment and work collaboratively with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. A proposed update to the sign ordinance after completion of commercial zoning updates is on the horizon, and it hopes to rezone the Bollinger Valley Study area. The work is scheduled to begin once the MCSP-IP project is complete most likely in the spring.

Implementation of a new town website to increase functionality, transparency and reduce administrative burdens was mentioned, as well as completing approved site improvements and develop economically feasible recommendations/solutions for commercial and other public uses of the Hacienda de las Flores property. New doors and windows will be installed along with ADA restroom improvements beginning in February. The town has approved an issuance of a Request for Proposal to attract a restaurant with a due date of March 9.

The council also plans to update the zoning code to incorporate new Accessory Dwelling Unit legislation and

develop a plan and initiate a re-evaluation of the town's three-step planned development process, development regulations and needs, and design guidelines, taking into account feedback from residents and other interested stakeholders.

An additional goal was proposed by Council Member Steve Woehleke to continue evaluation and implementation of viable strategies in Moraga's Climate Action Plan to lessen the town's impact on the environment. Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg noted that there are about 100 street lights that still need to be transitioned to LED; Pacific Gas and Electric Company's 0% loan to implement energy efficient upgrades in four of the town's facilities is in the works; energy efficient HVAC systems will be installed in the those same four facilities; and the two electric vehicle charging stations are expected to be installed at the town offices and Moraga Commons Park this summer.

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